

## Jubilees Past and Present

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SETTING aside all learned discussion about the term jubilee or the origin of the *Anno Santo*, one fact at least is certain, namely, that Boniface VIII was the first Pope officially to proclaim a Christian Jubilee. This pontiff had noticed a great increase in the number of pilgrims to St. Peter's at the beginning of the year 1300. These pilgrims asserted that they had come to kneel before the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles in order to obtain the special remission of their sins granted that year. The Pope, surprised at this announcement of what seemed to be a current belief, made personal inquiries on the subject, of many of the pilgrims, and in particular of a Savoyard noble, aged 107 years. The old man answered that his father had at the beginning of the century gained this indulgence, and had strongly impressed upon him that he should not neglect this grace if God allowed him to live till the end of the next one hundred years. Here then was a well defined tradition, handed down from father to son, from one generation to another, and it needed only the authority of the Pope to give it stability and permanence. This was done by the Bull *Antiquorum* published by Boniface VIII, February 22, 1300. Certain conditions were laid down on which this extraordinary indulgence was to be gained. These were sincere repentance with recourse to the tribunal of Penance, and thirty visits to the two Basilicas of St. Peter on the Vatican, and St. Paul on the Ostian Way. The number of visits was reduced to fifteen for those who were not residents of Rome.

After the solemn promulgation had been made, the Pope placed the Bull upon the altar of St. Peter, an act of homage to the Prince of the Apostles. A similar ceremony was gone through in St. Paul's-outside-the-walls, and couriers were dispatched in all directions to announce the glad tidings to the Faithful, and to invite them to come to Rome to share this great grace. To help on the piety of the pilgrims, each Friday the towel or napkin of Veronica was exposed for their veneration, and this will account for the fact that on several of the medals struck

in honor of these Jubilees, notably that of Gregory XV, we find this precious relic represented hanging above the *Porta Santa*.

In the time of Boniface VIII, the whole world was Catholic, and no sacrifice was deemed too great for their fervent piety when there was question of obtaining spiritual favors. The length of the journey, its hardships, the insecurity of the roads and the heat of the summer, the difficulty in obtaining provisions, formed no barrier, and Rome saw gathered within its walls in this year 1300 upwards of 2,000,000 pilgrims. To feed so large a multitude must have been a difficult problem, more especially when we bear in mind that Rome at this time counted only 25,000 inhabitants, but all the chronicles of the period lay stress on the remarkable fact that there was no dearth of food.

Boniface VIII had fixed the Jubilee for every hundredth year. Clement VI reduced it to fifty, and Urban VI in 1389, decreed that it should have place every thirty-three years, in memory of the years which Our Saviour passed on earth. Nicholas V in 1450, re-established the term of fifty years, but Paul II, desirous that every Christian should once at least in his lifetime enjoy this great favor, shortened again the interval between the Jubilees to twenty-five years. This is the practise which obtains at the present time. Boniface VIII had assigned the two basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul for the visits of obligation. To these Clement VI added that of St. John Lateran and Gregory XI, that of Saint Mary Major.

To promote this reunion of all the Faithful, Sixtus IV suspended during the Holy Year all other indulgences granted by the Church. The Faithful were thus obliged to come to Rome if they wished to obtain the remittance of the temporal punishment due to Divine Justice by reason of their sins. Some practises of piety were later on excepted from this suspension, as, for example, the plenary indulgence at the hour of death, those for reciting the Angelus, for making the prescribed Communion and visits during the Forty Hours, and for accompanying the Blessed Sacrament when carried to the sick. Besides this, while we cannot gain indulgences other than the Jubilee for ourselves, we may continue to gain them for the souls

in Purgatory, and more than one pontifical document has declared that all indulgences ordinarily granted to the living, may during this year be applied to these suffering souls.\*

The conditions for gaining this Jubilee indulgence are too well known to require enumeration. But why, it is asked, are so many and difficult conditions imposed to gain, after all, what is only a single plenary indulgence? Even for the Romans, the basilicas to be visited are far apart, and to visit each of them as required involves no little fatigue, to which are added the expense and inconvenience of a long journey for those who come from other cities and countries. It would be much simpler to remain quietly at home and recite some of the many prayers to which plenary indulgences have been attached by the Popes. This is true, but the alternative rests on a false supposition, or rather does not exist at all, since as we have seen, it is precisely these indulgences, with some few exceptions, that are suspended during the Holy Year. Besides this, it is not quite correct to say the plenary indulgence of the Jubilee does not differ from other plenary indulgences. The Bull issued by Boniface VIII says "We accord not only a full and entire, but a *most full pardon of all their sins*." Now in itself one plenary indulgence cannot be fuller than another, yet one indulgence may be accompanied by more numerous graces which aid the Faithful to obtain a fuller pardon of their sins, and with it the remission of the penalty due to them. To the voice of His Vicar, who opens with lavish hand the spiritual treasures of which he is the guardian, God answers by an outpouring of His favors in such profusion that it is placed within the power of all to obtain this fullness of pardon.

It is needless to add that all this presupposes cooperation with the graces that are given us, and the greater the recollection and piety with which we comply with the prescribed conditions, the greater will be the spiritual benefits that will accrue to our souls. In this principle we have a cogent reason for the centering of the Jubilee graces in Rome itself. All the associations of the Eternal City; the sight of so many pilgrims from every quarter of the

\*See last article.

globe, in itself an image and a proof of the Church's Catholicism; the grandeur and solemnity of the ecclesiastical ceremonies—all must make for an increase of devotion, and bring home to us as never before the reality of the supernatural. Most of us live in what Father Faber of the Oratory has so well called "the circumambient atmosphere of heresy," but the pilgrim to Rome, at least the Rome of old, is transported to a clime where all is redolent of faith, and treads a soil dyed by the blood of countless generations of martyrs.

Nor were there wanting in Rome itself extraordinary aids to gain the extraordinary graces of the Holy Year. Benedict XIV inaugurated the custom, followed by his successors, of having missions given to the people in the streets and public squares of the city. The first preacher was a saint, Leonard of Port Maurice, the effect of whose fervent exhortations was enhanced by the discipline to blood which he was wont to take in the presence of the congregation at each of his sermons. To him also we owe the erection of the Stations of the Cross in the amphitheatre of the Coliseum. The Stations now no longer exist. Under the pretext of historical excavations, the Italian Government has destroyed this monument of Christian piety, the source of so many graces to countless pilgrims. Leo XIII had ordered missions to be given, but they can no longer be held in the streets and squares. In Catholic Rome, *Roma la Santa*, Christ has to be preached, as it were, behind closed doors.

The Jubilee once commenced, the pilgrims flocked to Rome, where they were received with a hospitality and a generosity that almost passes belief. Thousands were fed and lodged by the Pope, free of all charge, at the Hospital of the Holy Trinity, and in the many various national hospitals and refuges which earned for Italy the high encomium, as far back as the seventeenth century, "that no country in the world equals Italy in the care of the poor and sick." Take for example the Jubilee of 1600, under the pontificate of Clement VIII. Rome numbered only 109,000 inhabitants and yet there was no lack of provisions for 3,000,000 of pilgrims, and the bill of fare which had come down to us through contemporary chronicles evidences both the good quality and quantity of the

food that was set before them. Even private homes and princely palaces were thrown open for their entertainment, and we read of a certain Prince Lodovisi who had, in 1159, 12,000 men and 2,000 women as guests at his table for a dinner of eight courses.

The pilgrims generally arrived in groups or companies, and in the absence of modern conveniences, on foot, although if we judge aright their spirit of penance, we might conjecture that they would adopt the same laborious mode of traveling were they still living in our day of railroads and electric cars. Each company had its distinctive dress and banner, and rules of action. Thus we find a confraternity called the Hermits whose members were bound to observe throughout their journey the strictest silence. Another confraternity travelled barefooted a distance of some 700 miles, with the further penitential exercise of taking the discipline three times each day with iron chains. Even the Popes themselves did not hesitate to lead the way in these paths of penance and piety. Each of the Popes was wont to go several times during the Holy Year to wash the feet of the pilgrims and to serve table at the Hospital of the Holy Trinity, which till the time of its seizure by the Italian Government, was for many successive Jubilees the headquarters of the visitors to Rome. Clement VIII was seventy years of age at the time of the Jubilee of 1600, and to expiate the faults of these years, he took the heroic resolution to pay a corresponding number of visits to each of the four basilicas. With bare feet he joined the pilgrims in their processions, fasted every Wednesday of the Jubilee Year, and every Saturday on bread and water, and each Sunday night he might be seen mounting on his knees the steps of the *Scala Santa*. God visibly blessed the zeal of the Pontiff, and the Jubilee proclaimed by him has come down to us as the greatest ever celebrated.

As time went on, the Popes, recognizing the piety aroused, and the edification given by large confraternities and societies making these visits in a body, granted permission that one or two visits made in this manner would satisfy the condition of twenty or thirty visits imposed on individuals. On the first Sunday in October, 1600, one of these processions had in line 25,000 persons. On the

second Sunday of the same month the Confraternity of the Rosary numbered 50,000 pilgrims, including eighteen cardinals. These are not isolated instances. It is the repeated story of each Holy Year, and one can judge therefrom the marked increase in piety that must have come from these reunions of the Faithful.

Unhappily this present year [1900] cannot hold out such incentives to devotion. The old-time processions which walked the streets of Rome chanting sacred hymns or reciting their beads will be but a memory of the past. Rome is in the power of her enemies. The Pope's voice may indeed be heard to the uttermost ends of the earth and his influence in Christian and pagan lands alike, but his feet dare not cross the threshold of the palace where he is kept a prisoner by a so called Catholic King. Leo XIII alone, of all the world, cannot fulfil the conditions imposed upon the Faithful to gain the Jubilee indulgence, and it is a sad, and strange, and significant fact that this aged old man, invested with the highest authority on earth, the guardian of the Church's destiny, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, has to avail himself of the special privilege granted to cloistered religious and those confined in prison, to obtain that fullest pardon of the temporal punishment of sin attached to the Holy Year.

So far we have spoken of the Jubilee year considered in itself, and have pointed out the great spiritual favors which accompany it and the conditions on which they may be gained. We have gleaned some notion of the vast crowds of pilgrims who came at each of twenty-one successive Jubilees to the Eternal City, and the charity and generosity with which they were entertained during their sojourn there. A word on the solemn ceremonies which mark the opening and closing of the *Anno Santo* must here find a place to complete the picture.

In this opening we may distinguish two stages—the proclamation of the forthcoming Jubilee and its actual commencement. A medal, struck by order of Clement VIII, conveys a fair idea of the manner in which the proclamation was made. The pontiff wearing his tiara is represented seated upon a throne before the door of St. Peter's. He has just handed to one of his prelates the Bull of Proclamation to be read from a pulpit erected

for that purpose. In the foreground of the medal, trumpeters are seen, and we know from history that with the notes of their instruments were mingled the sounds of bells in the 350 churches of the city and the booming of cannon from the castle of *Sant' Angelo*. But in this our year of grace, 1899, there were neither sounds of trumpet nor salvos of artillery. The Pope did not leave the Vatican, and it was Mgr. De l'Aquila Visconti, who with little or no ceremony, save the presence of a few prelates and officers of the Pontifical Court, read the Bull proclaiming the Jubilee. It was then read in the other basilicas, which it is obligatory to visit as a condition for gaining the indulgence.

The second step, the formal opening of the Holy Year, at the first institution of the Jubilee consisted simply in reading the Pontifical Bull, though of course this was done with great solemnity. Another ceremony, of a historic nature, which may now be taken to symbolize the outpouring of Divine favors, extraordinary in their character and yet so rare and transitory in their granting, that all must hasten to profit by them, is the opening of the *Porta Santa*. This is entered only during the Holy Year, and at its end is walled up till the recurrence of another Jubilee. A magnificent bas-relief on the tomb of Clement X, at St. Peter's, gives us some notion of the solemnity of this ceremony, while the four memorial medals that have come down to us, represent the successive steps in the formal opening of the *Porta Santa*. Pius VI is shown in the act of striking with a golden mallet the three traditional blows, while he recites the versicle, *Aperite mihi portas justitiae*—"Open to me the gates of justice." Innocent X is engaged in tearing down the wall. Leo XII is just entering St. Peter's, and Innocent X, having already entered with the Pontifical Court, is about to be followed by a group of pious pilgrims, one of whom may be seen kissing with devotion the threshold of the Holy Door.

Scarcely less impressive are the ceremonies attending the closing of the *Porta Santa*. After the solemn First Vespers of Christmas, and the veneration of the Sacred Relics of the Passion, the Pope, preceded by his cardinals and other prelates, moves down the great basilica and

out into the portico through the *Porta Santa*, the while the psalm *Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum* is being chanted. He then blesses and incenses the bricks and mortars, and putting on his tiara and girding himself with a white apron, he receives from the Cardinal Penitentiary the trowel with which he lays the first brick of the new wall. This prelate in his turn then lays one or more bricks, and while the masons are completing the work of enclosing the door, the choir sings the hymn, *Coelestis Urbs Jerusalem*, whose last notes are the signal that the Jubilee is ended, and the stream of indulgences which for a year has been pent up, as it were, in the Eternal City now once again flows through a thousand channels to the Catholic world.

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### The Jubilee of 1900

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THE Jubilee Bull of 1900 was looked forward to with interest, not only on account of the solemnity it proclaimed, but its publication was doubly solemn coming so recently after the severe illness of the Sovereign Pontiff.

Nor were the Faithful disappointed; for in scholarly majesty, beauty of language and sentiment, and above all in the deep, heartfelt devotion which breathes through every line, the Jubilee Bull of Leo XIII will go down to posterity as a record of one of the greatest pontiffs ever given to the Church. Well may the inspired utterances, expressing the deep pathos of the sentiments of the aged heart, so near eternity, with its apostolic yearning for the return of the wanderers to the fold of Peter, be graven on the gold hammer with which Leo XIII's Jubilee will live in the archives of future history. Few modern speeches or letters contain a more memorable address than that of Leo XIII (even to those who miss the spiritual meaning) to the Faithful: "Rome, then, invites you lovingly to her bosom, O beloved children, wherever you may be, who are able to visit her"; or the concluding sentences on the effect and grandeur of Eternal Rome on the Christian soul, in which the graceful fancy of the pontifical poet reveals itself in flowing, eloquent language.



According to ancient usage, the Papal Bull was publicly proclaimed for the first time on Ascension day, May 12, 1899, by the Papal Abreviator di Curia, in the portico of St. Peter, after having been received direct from the hands of the Holy Father in the Vatican. Monsignor Dell' Aquila Visconti, the Papal Abreviator di Curia, made the publication from a pulpit erected in the center of the portico, in the presence of the Prefect of Pontifical Ceremonies, the Pontifical Precursors, and the Chapter of St. Peter's, to the sound of the joy-bells of every church in the Eternal City, which rang out their welcome to the approach of Holy Year. The Pontifical Precursor then carried the Bull to the other major basilicas, where it was solemnly read in the same manner and affixed to the portals; the next proclamation not being made till the fourth Sunday of Advent, a week before the opening of the Holy Door. Despite the long interval between the first and last proclamation of the Jubilee, minds were by no means idle in the preparations for the Jubilee Year. The work of the "Committee for the Homage to Our Saviour," by means of religious acts, practical charities, erection of memorials, and arrangements for the reception of pilgrims of every kind and of every class, proceeded apace. Retreats for the clergy began with the spiritual exercises at the Vatican, in which the aged Pontiff himself took part. It was a worthy preparation, and when the long-expected Christmas Eve came at last, it found Rome ready and waiting for the Papal summons to usher in the new year and century with praise and prayer. The last public proclamation of the Bull took place on the fourth Sunday of Advent, in the portico of St. Peter's, where it was read aloud, in both Latin and Italian, by the Prelates Auditors of the Rote.

Already, in the Consistory of December 14, the Sovereign Pontiff had appointed the Cardinal Legates *ad latere* who have the privilege of opening the Holy Doors at the three other patriarchal basilicas of Rome, and it was arranged that at each basilica the doors should be opened simultaneously with that of St. Peter's on Christmas Eve; three well-known cardinals, the archpriests of the basilicas, performing the ceremony. The splendid presentation hammers with which the ceremony of open-

ing was to be performed by the Pope and the Cardinal Legates were all in readiness for the ceremony, and a few days before Christmas the hammer for the Papal ceremony was presented to His Holiness by the Committee of Homage to the Saviour, under the presidency of his Eminence, Cardinal Jacobini, the new Cardinal Vicar of Rome. It was a touching sight, say all those present, to watch the venerable Pontiff as he took the symbolic implement in his hand and pressed it to his heart. It is a gift in its richness and beauty worthy of the episcopate of the Shepherd of Souls, and symbolic of the occasion it represents with its rich gold hammer inlaid with gems, and bearing the words *Aperite mihi portas justitiae*, while the ivory handle is embossed with gold ornamentation. The dedication by the episcopate is engraved upon a medal attached by gold chains to the handle, which also bears the memorable words already quoted from the Bull: "Rome, then, invites you lovingly to her bosom, etc." As he handled it for the first time Leo XIII repeated the words aloud to the bystanders; expressing his satisfaction at the gift of those "who deigned to call themselves his brethren in the apostolic charge," and his hope that this opening of the Church's treasures would bring profit to many souls. Three nations were represented in the three hammers with which the Cardinal Legates *ad latere* opened the doors of the major basilicas to the Faithful. Catholic France had the honor of presenting the offering of the costly hammer, with its rich traceries, to his Eminence Cardinal Satolli, Archpriest of St. John Lateran, who threw open the doors of pardon of the Mother and Head of the churches in the world. Catholic Italy gave the hammer to Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli for the opening of Santa Maria Maggiore, and Cardinal Oreglia di San Stefano, Dean of the Sacred College, opened the holy gates of St. Paul's-outside-the-walls with the Jubilee gift of Catholic Germany.

Only one more interesting ceremony remained to be accomplished before the inauguration of the Jubilee; that of examining and verifying the contents of the holy doors of the four basilicas. For weeks the *Sanpietrini*, or workmen of Saint Peter's, had been preparing the portico of Charlemagne, enclosing it in wood and glass, to mini-

mize the risk incurred by the venerable Pontiff in exposing himself to the chill of a draughty portico. At last, however, the arrangements were complete, and the workmen turned their attention to the work of knocking in the *Porta Santa* and putting it lightly together again, so that on the light touch of the Sovereign Pontiff with the hammer it would fall inward, and be carried away from the inside. Seen from the portico outside, the walled-up *Porta Santa*, with its severe metal cross in the centre, and its inscriptions of Popes Pius VI, Gregory XIII, and Leo XII, is simplicity itself; simpler even than the other great portals of bronze which give access to the basilica of the Apostles, but it recalls a world of pontifical memories, of jubilees proclaimed on this holy spot. The work of demolition began from the inside on Tuesday, December 14, in the presence of Monsignor Della Volpe, major-domo of His Holiness, attended by the secretary of the Prefect of the Apostolic Palace, the *Economo* of the fabric of St. Peter, Monsignor De Neckar, and the architects of the basilica, as witnesses. The Papal major-domo began the ceremony by kissing the cross in the centre of the door, then gave the sign to the *Sanpietrini* to level the wall. The inside bricks revealed various initials, the papal arms, the arms of the Vatican basilica, and the initials of a tile-maker whose descendants still ply their trade near St. Peter's. Under the central stone, as the picks and hammers do their work, the hidden memorials of the Jubilee of 1825 came to light, after seventy-five years: a marble casket with the inscription: "Leo XII, P. M. Anno 1825, in the IIIrd Year of His Pontificate"; a receptacle for coins of the period; a leaden box, and three blocks of marble, bearing the names of the *Economo* of St. Peter's and the superintendent of the *Sanpietrini* in 1825. In the presence of Monsignor Della Volpe the caskets were opened and examined in the sacristy of St. Peter's. They contained respectively a copper casket inside the marble, sealed with the seals of the major-domo of Leo XII, "Francesco Marazini, Prefect of the Pontifical Household," and containing about one hundred and fourteen medals of the epoch of Leo XII, in bronze, silver, and gold, with a parchment describing them. The leaden casket contained a curious souvenir—two rosaries

in gold and white enamel, bearing a medal coined in Paris on the birth of the Duke of Bordeaux, and a cross presented by the Duke of Rochefoucauld to his godson, M. Millet, who deposited these things in the Holy Door. The coins, medals, and other records found in the Holy Door were conveyed to the Holy Father for his immediate inspection, and the Sovereign Pontiff found much to interest him in these souvenirs of the Jubilee he witnessed in his youth. The same examination of the interior of the holy doors took place in the three other basilicas, coins and memorials of a like nature being found walled up in each.

The *Porta Santa* in St. Peter's, by an ingenious engineering arrangement on the part of the superintendent of the *Sanpietrini*, was put lightly together with a thin coating of lath and plaster, so that from outside it presented its ordinary appearance; while inside the door was attached to cranes and pulleys which, on a signal given by an electric bell, would fall inwards without the slightest hitch.

All was ready in St. Peter's on December 23. From every nook and cranny of the portico the keen winter air was rigidly excluded, and braziers in all available places regulated the atmosphere throughout the night. As the joy-bells of every church in Rome rang out their summons to the morrow's ceremony, pilgrims and Romans knew that the long-expected Jubilee was on the eve of fulfilment. Early on the morning of Christmas Eve, though the air was chill and rain had fallen on the glistening streets, all Rome turned its face to the Vatican, and St. Peter's was the magnet and loadstar for all. As it was considered the most suitable hour for the venerable Pontiff, the opening ceremony was fixed for mid-day, though by ancient usage it should take place just before Vespers. But time was as nothing to the patient pilgrims who had come from far and near to hear the Vicar of Christ proclaim the Jubilee, and eight o'clock found them waiting at the bronze door which gave entrance to the portico. By special privilege (the space within the portico being limited) tickets were also distributed to receive the Apostolic benediction from Leo XIII in St. Peter's, after he entered the Holy Door. In the ritual for the opening

of a Jubilee the basilica should remain *closed* and *empty* until the Sovereign Pontiff passes through, all the public following him, but on this occasion, as admittance was by ticket and thousands, unable to be present at the opening ceremony, would thereby have missed all chance of seeing his Holiness, the rubric was relaxed; and while the Papal ceremony proceeded in the portico, St. Peter's was slowly filling by the sacristy entrances with great crowds of people. Troops were drawn up in cordon across the square of St. Peter's, only allowing those with tickets of admission to pass: but law and order were perfect, and to the credit of Romans and foreigners be it said, that in all the cosmopolitan crowds which crushed through the holy doors of Rome's Basilica on Christmas Eve *not a single accident occurred* to mar the religious solemnity of the Jubilee of Peace—a modern contrast this of our less excitable age to the jubilees of medieval times, and even those of later date, when people were crushed to death in numbers in the confusion. Even on the last Jubilee, in 1825, it is said that as many as eight persons were killed, as the result of accidents in the crush of the holy doors. So, if we have lost much of the picturesqueness of olden times, we have gained in prudence and common sense. But as for picturesqueness, it still survives and crops out in Rome unexpectedly. Few contrasts could have been more startling, and yet more Roman, than the bright decorations, many-colored cloths and brocades hanging from the windows of the tall old houses in the Borgo and Piazza of St. Peter's, and the close stream of electric tram-cars, jostling each other in close file as they deposited the modern Jubilee pilgrim at St. Peter's gate.

Once inside of the bronze door of the Vatican, however, where the Papal flag floats over the entrance, and, pike in hand, stands the sturdy Swiss, drawn up across the barrier, Rome changes with one of her lightning transformations from modern utilitarianism to medieval picturesqueness. The portico of Charlemagne is the throne-room of the Papal sovereignty, in surroundings beautiful and picturesque as the ancient ritual to which they form the background. We entered the portico from the side door of the *Scala Regia*; its vast expanse was carpeted,

the walls hung with crimson and gold draperies, and raised galleries or tribunes ran half way around it, and across the further end. No trace of its colonnades remained, for they were completely boarded up and covered with the brocade, and lighted in the upper portion by glass—a colossal work of preparation, for which the *Sanpietrini* deserve much credit. Close by the *Porta Santa* was erected the Papal throne, a symphony in white and gold, of cloth of silver with raised gold fleur-de-lis, and a crimson canopy bearing the papal arms, while great tapestry paintings flanked the Holy Door, on a background of rich velvet. All the five entrances were closed, and festooned with graceful drapery of silk and velvet.

The space around the throne in the centre was reserved for the cardinals, bishops, and the Papal court, the rest of the portico being occupied by the public with special tickets of admission; while the ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, the Roman patriciate, and the Knights of Malta took their places in raised galleries facing the throne. The royal tribune (destined for members of royal reigning houses) had for occupants the Duchess of Trani (the widowed Duchess Matilda of Bavaria) and the Duke d'Alençon, who was the object of so much sympathy in 1897 on the terrible death of his wife in the ill-fated Charity Bazaar in Paris.

During the time of waiting the scene was one of ever-changing motion, every figure in the portico appearing suitable to its surroundings. The first arrivals were the general public of distinguished strangers and Romans, the men in evening dress and the ladies in black, with lace veils on their heads, who poured ceaselessly in till after eleven o'clock, when one began to doubt if the portico really only held 1,000, as had been just stated, or from 3,000 to 4,000 at least.

Almost as if by magic, the crimson-covered galleries of the ambassadors were brilliant with color in the uniforms of the diplomats of various courts, glittering with stars and official decorations, while the ladies of the Roman patriciate glided by to their places with a rustle of silken trains, the soft folds of their Spanish lace veils forming a pleasing contrast to the sombre black of the court dress, relieved by flashing family jewels. The Papal

chamberlains of the Cape and Sword in their Van Dyke costume did the honors of the tribunes, while the Swiss and Pontifical gendarmes formed the picket of the guard. The cynosure of all eyes was the *Porto Santa*, which presented to the observer, not near enough to perceive its covering of paper and plaster, its ordinary appearance, save that on the sides there hung long gold cords or tassels, in connection with the electric bell inside St. Peter's, which was to give the signal for the withdrawal of the doors. A huge silver basin containing the holy water for the washing of the threshold stood near the throne, and all was in readiness for the Papal ceremony as the clock struck half past eleven.

Simultaneously the peal of joy-bells clanged sonorously over Rome, to call on all the churches to re-echo the note of rejoicing, bidding every heart in the Eternal City turn, at least in spirit, to the Papal ceremony under St. Peter's dome; for at the moment the bells began to ring the Pope, having assumed the Papal vestments, was kneeling at the foot of the altar in the Sistine Chapel, intoning the *Veni Creator*, the signal for the formation of the procession. They were moments of keenest anticipation, as we waited for the great doors to be opened; but the storm of the joy-bells continued in every note, in every key, as if Rome had gone wild in the riot of rejoicing. At last, high above all, arose clear and sweet the distant chant of the choir in the strophes of the *Veni Creator*; coming nearer and nearer, note by note, as the procession slowly descended the stairs from the Sistine. As it swelled louder the bells ceased, and silence reigned over the vast assembly, broken only by the chanting, plainly audible through the now open doorway. Finally the gold cross, marking the beginning of the procession, headed the defile of the Religious Orders of the church, walking two-by-two, giving place in their turn to the College of Parish Priests, the prelates, the pontifical chaplains, the consistorial advocates, the chapter of the Vatican Basilica—a conglomeration of vivid color: white, scarlet, violet and purple. Then came the long line of bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, and cardinals, in white vestments glittering with gold embroidery, white miters on their heads and lighted candles in their hands, a moving vista of radiant



splendor, as they slowly, almost interminably, filed into the portico, and took their places around the throne. It seemed as though no sight could have been more impressive than this march of the Hierarchy of the Church, but a picture still more striking was in store as, from the shadows of the archway, a crimson chair with its white-clad occupant appeared high in sight under a golden canopy, the feather screens waving behind it in billows of undulating whiteness. Simultaneously the silver trumpets pealed out the triumphal march, and Leo XIII, in vestments of cloth and silver, with a white miter on his head, arose in the *sedia gestatoria* and blessed the crowds, as he was slowly borne along, the white radiance around him reflected on the brilliant uniforms of the princes, prelates, soldiers of his noble court. Almost before we had time to realize the exquisite picture it had passed and the Pope had ascended the throne, and, surrounded by cardinals and bishops, read the opening collect of the ceremony. Another moment, and with the rapid movements so characteristic of him, his Holiness had left the throne and stood before the *Porta Santa*, when the Cardinal Penitentiary (Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli) proffered the symbolic hammer. A silence, if possible more unbroken than before, reigned at that solemn moment, and each one in the dense crowd felt as if he were alone with the Pontiff at the opening ceremony. The first loud knock of the hammer on the door resounded through the length and breadth of the portico, and the voice of the venerable Vicar of Christ intoned in unfaltering accents, slow but unutterably distinct: *Aperite mihi portas justitiae*, the choir responding: *Ingressus in ea confitebor Domino.*" A moment's pause, the double knocks resounded again, and the ringing voice rose once more on the stillness, this time in louded and clearer tone: *Introibo in domum tuam Domine*, with its corresponding response by the choir. Then again, and for the last time, the knocking of the gold hammer fell on the holy portals, while the Sovereign Pontiff intoned, in a tone still higher, *Aperite portas quoniam nobiscum Deus*, and, with a slight vibration and rending, the *Porta Santa* fell back and disappeared instantaneously from sight, leaving the long walled-up portals opened wide to all the world. The Holy



Father then returned to the throne, where he recited the prayer *Actiones nostras*, after which the six penitentiaries of the basilica washed the threshold and sides of the doorway with sponges of holy water, to the strains of the Psalm *Jubilate Deo*, set to Palestrina's music, never produced in Rome since the last Jubilee of 1825. . . .

It was a sight which might have inspired an artist, under the title: *In hoc signo vinces*, or "At the Century's Close." And yet people tell us that religion is out of date; but the unbelieving generation are wrong, as they were in the days when the standard of the first Christian emperor floated in the sky. "In this Sign thou shalt conquer" is true now as then, and until the end of time Christ's Vicar will bear the standard of the Crucified King.

Following the Pope into St. Peter's came the train of cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and prelates, each carrying a lighted candle and chanting the hymn of praise. Then the great doorways were thrown open and throngs who had assisted at the ceremony poured into the Basilica, emptying the portico in an instant. It had been arranged that the Holy Father would give the Apostolic benediction from a raised platform before the tomb of St. Peter. So he passed with his cortège up the right nave, which had been completely barricaded from the rest of the church, so that his Holiness was enabled to pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and take a short rest and restorative before appearing amidst the people, who filled the two lateral naves, and the lower part of the church opposite the statue of St. Peter. More striking, perhaps, than the scene in the portico was this Papal function in St. Peter's, for the vast spaces, the grand architecture, and the waiting thousands under St. Peter's dome, are the suitable environment and background of a Papal procession. The Italian pilgrims and Rome's Catholic associations were grouped together in one spot, ready to join in the Papal cortège, and form a guard of honor around the Sovereign Pontiff's chair, and the radiant sunshine streamed on their brilliant colored banners, glinting also on the gold and marble of the Apostle's tomb. It was long that we waited, but after all one does not wait for a Pope in St. Peter's every day; and besides

taking a much needed rest in the interval, the Holy Father received the religious confraternities of Rome, assigning them their charge as custodians of the holy doors of the basilicas throughout the Jubilee Year.

Once more the chanting of the choir was heard, the long procession moved slowly forward, and the *sedia gestatoria* under the white canopy appeared suddenly in sight of the people. A burst of enthusiasm arose from every side of the great church, drowning choir and silver trumpets alike. It was the one touch of nature which stirred the hearts of the multitude, in seeing the venerable man before them; so old, so apparently feeble, yet full of the mighty spirit which sustains the frail body; for though weary with the strain of the morning, Leo XIII would not give in till his duty was done and he had blessed the Faithful in St. Peter's. The *sedia gestatoria* was placed on a platform before the confessional, and here, standing before the people with arms outstretched over them, in all the majesty of the Pontificate, the successor of St. Peter gave the Apostolic benediction and plenary indulgence from St. Peter's tomb. It was over all too quickly, and the gorgeous procession faded from our sight; but the inauguration of the Jubilee of 1900 by Leo XIII was a day not soon to be forgotten by those present. From that moment Rome's holy doors were open for the whole Jubilee Year.

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## Indulgences Suspended During Jubilee Year

N. C. W. C. News Service

**T**WO Papal decrees suspending indulgences outside the City of Rome during the year of the jubilee have been issued by the Sacred Penitentiary. Exemptions are made, however, for certain classes of indulgences, which may be gained as usual during the Holy Year, and for certain classes of persons who are prevented from making the pilgrimage to Rome in the course of the year of the jubilee.

The following indulgences applied to the living are

## INDULGENCES SUSPENDED

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exempted in the first of the decrees: Indulgences in *articulo mortis*, the Angelus indulgences, indulgences gained while visiting a church at Forty Hours' Devotion, indulgences gained by those who accompany the Blessed Sacrament on sick calls, the indulgence gained by visiting the Portiuncula church at Assisi, and indulgences conferred by cardinals, Papal nuncios, archbishops, and bishops in granting the Pontifical blessing.

A special decree permits indulgences of the Jubilee Year to be gained without visiting the tombs of the Apostles and the major basilicas of Rome by the following classes of persons:—Nuns, their postulants, novices and students, and all residing in their convents. Anchorites, hermits and members of such religious Orders as the Trappists, Camaldolese and Carthusians. Captives, prisoners and exiles. The sick. Working people who cannot get away from their work long enough to make the journey. Those more than seventy years old.

The decree closes with a special appeal to those exempt from the need of going to Rome to gain the jubilee indulgences that they undertake during the year special works of piety and charity which their bishops or their confessors will recommend. To those undertaking these special works of piety and charity, and who receive the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion, and pray for the intention of the Holy Father, the Pope grants a plenary indulgence.

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE CELEBRATION

The members of the hierarchy throughout the world have contributed to pay for the gold hammer and trowel which the Pope will use in the solemn ceremonies connected with the opening and closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's. These contributions were sent in response to an appeal made to the hierarchy by Cardinal Pompili.

From the very ancient times it has been customary for the Popes to distribute souvenir medals to pilgrims who visit Rome during a Holy Year, a custom which will be adhered to next year. The medals, designed by the Engineer Mezzana, are now being struck off. On one side they bear an impression representing the Pope in the act of signing the Bill proclaiming the Jubilee Year,

while the obverse side bears a picture of the Dome of St. Peter's surrounded by rays with a field of ripe corn in the foreground. Underneath is the legend: "*Videte regiones, quas jam albae sunt ad messem.*"

Besides this souvenir medal there will be an official commemorative medal for the Holy Year and the missionary exhibition. The design for this was agreed upon by the directing committee of the exhibition and the central committee for the Holy Year. It portrays, on one side, the ceremony of the opening of the Holy Door and, on the other, the missionary buildings in the Cortile della Pigna.

Another special medal to be conferred in the presence of the Pope is also being prepared. It will be presented to those who distinguish themselves in activities for the success of the Holy Year, particularly in the matter of organizing pilgrimages.

Several special publications in connection with the missionary exhibit are being arranged for. There will be a fortnightly illustrated review, *L'Esposizione Missionaria Vaticana*, edited by Monsignor Luigi Grammatica, with the assistance of many noted scholars, which will be published in such form that a file of the various numbers will constitute a desirable souvenir of the exhibition.

An abridged guide directing attention to exhibits of special interest, and a small atlas containing summarized missionary information, are also being prepared. Then there will be a large atlas, innumerable maps, three great plastic reproductions of different parts of the world, and other exhibits in the geography section showing the geographic distribution of missionary activities. Souvenir calendars for 1925 have been prepared bearing a brief monograph in Italian, French, Spanish, German, and English, on the Catholic Apostolate.